

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

106th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 107

May 11, 1999, 5:49 p.m.
Page S-5018 Temp. Record

JUVENILE JUSTICE/New Federal School Violence Programs

SUBJECT: Violent and Repeat Juvenile Offender Accountability and Rehabilitation Act of 1999 . . . S. 254. Hatch motion to table the Robb amendment No. 325 to the Hatch/Biden Sessions modified amendment No. 322, as amended.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 55-44

SYNOPSIS: As introduced, S. 254, the Violent and Repeat Juvenile Offender Accountability and Rehabilitation Act of 1999, will modernize Federal grant programs that give aid to State and local governments for juvenile law enforcement and juvenile crime prevention efforts. Approximately \$1 billion per year for the next 5 years will be authorized for those grant programs. Also, \$100 million annually will be authorized for joint Federal-State-local efforts to address gang-related juvenile crime.

The Hatch/Biden/Sessions modified amendment would earmark 25 percent of the \$450 million annually that the bill will provide for accountability block grants for drug treatment and crime prevention programs. (Accountability block grants will be given to States for a variety of purposes, including: the construction of juvenile offender detention facilities; implementing graduated sanctions programs; utilizing programs for the coordination of justice and social service resources for juvenile offenders; fingerprinting or conducting DNA tests on juvenile offenders; establishing record-keeping abilities; enforcing truancy laws; and funding various prevention programs, including after-school programs, anti-gang activities, literacy programs, and job-training programs. To be eligible for funding, States will have to adopt three core accountability policies: the establishment of graduated sanctions to ensure appropriate correction of juvenile offenders; drug testing juvenile offenders upon arrest in appropriate cases; and recognition of victims' rights and needs in the juvenile justice system). The amendment would also authorize \$45 million for grants to the States to hire prosecutors for juvenile offenders. Finally, the amendment would extend the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund until the year 2005. As amended by a Gregg amendment (see vote No. 106), the amendment would also add the "Safe Students Act" which would provide grants for various school safety programs.

The Robb amendment would create several new Federal bureaucracies to spend \$1.4 billion more per year on many of the areas

(See other side)

YEAS (55)		NAYS (44)		NOT VOTING (1)	
Republicans (55 or 100%)	Democrats (0 or 0%)	Republicans (0 or 0%)	Democrats (44 or 100%)	Republicans (0)	Democrats (1)
Abraham	Hutchinson		Akaka	Johnson	
Allard	Hutchison		Baucus	Kennedy	
Ashcroft	Inhofe		Bayh	Kerrey	
Bennett	Jeffords		Biden	Kerry	
Bond	Kyl		Bingaman	Kohl	
Brownback	Lott		Boxer	Landrieu	
Bunning	Lugar		Breaux	Lautenberg	
Burns	Mack		Bryan	Leahy	
Campbell	McCain		Byrd	Levin	
Chafee	McConnell		Cleland	Lieberman	
Cochran	Murkowski		Conrad	Lincoln	
Collins	Nickles		Daschle	Mikulski	
Coverdell	Roberts		Dodd	Murray	
Craig	Roth		Dorgan	Reed	
Crapo	Santorum		Durbin	Reid	
DeWine	Sessions		Edwards	EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE: Robb—Official Business Rockefeller—Necessarily Absent Sarbanes—Illness Schumer—Other Tortorella—Other	
Domenici	Shelby		Feingold		
Enzi	Smith, Bob		Feinstein		
Fitzgerald	Smith, Gordon		Graham		
Frist	Snowe		Harkin	SYMBOLS: AY—Announced Yea AN—Announced Nay PY—Paired Yea PN—Paired Nay	
Gorton	Specter		Hollings		
Gramm	Stevens		Inouye		
Grams	Thomas				
Grassley	Thompson				
Gregg	Thurmond				
Hagel	Voinovich				
Hatch	Warner				
Helms					

Compiled and written by the staff of the Republican Policy Committee—Larry E. Craig, Chairman

already addressed in the underlying bill or that are being addressed at the State level. First, it would authorize \$100 million for a National Resource Center for School Safety. Functions of that Center would include the operation of a national hotline for anonymous reporting on school violence. Second, it would authorize a new Federal grant program to give \$722 million annually for such purposes as educational reform. Third, it would authorize more funding for alcohol and drug abuse prevention. Finally, it would provide \$600 million more annually for afterschool programs.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. After debate, Senator Hatch moved to table the Robb amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

The Robb amendment is a hodgepodge of objectionable proposals with the common premise being that the Federal Government needs to give a lot of instructions and a lot of money to the States. That premise is false. Passing this amendment would create new bureaucracies that would stifle innovation and likely cause more harm than good, at a price tag of \$1.4 billion per year. We know that Democrats tend to measure the value of things by how much of the taxpayers' money they are willing to spend on them, but we urge them to try to exercise a little more restraint. The first part of their amendment would create a national resource center on school safety at the cost of \$100 million in fiscal year 2000 and such sums as necessary in the next 2 years. Why? Where is the demonstrated need? The proposed functions that this center would fill are being met at the State level already. For instance, the amendment would require the creation of a Federal hotline that students could call to report on school violence. Local areas have already been establishing their own hotlines. The Federal Government, instead of making its own hotline, should help State and local governments that have not yet acted set up their own. In fact, this bill will provide for that help. The next part of the amendment would create a new multi-department Federal program to spend \$460 million per year on a variety of loosely defined purposes, including "school safety," "educational reform," and "safe school policies." The third part of the amendment would have us spend \$100 million per year for a new Federal program to assist children in dealing with violence. The next part of the amendment would create new national and regional centers for "violence related stress" at a cost of \$50 million in the first year and such sums as necessary in the next 2 years. After authorizing that program, the amendment would authorize \$40 million for each of the next 5 years for a new program to provide social services to youth age 21 or younger who have been released from incarceration and who have "serious emotional disturbances." The amendment goes on and on, with one proposal after another for new Federal programs with new Federal spending. Are the purposes laudatory? Yes. Perhaps that is why the Federal Government already has many programs that address them. For instance, it already has 53 violence prevention programs, 47 substance abuse prevention programs, 46 mentoring programs, and 52 parental and family intervention programs. According to the General Accounting Office, the Federal Government spends \$4.4 billion annually on 117 different juvenile crime prevention programs. According to a study by the Clinton Justice Department, first, most crime prevention funds are being spent where they are needed least, second, most of the crime prevention programs the Federal Government has have never been evaluated to see if they are effective, and, third, of those programs that have been evaluated, some of the least effective programs are receiving the most money. How many times must our colleagues reinvent the wheel? This amendment is nothing more than the typical Democratic response to any legislation that comes to the floor: more money; more Federal bureaucracy; and more Federal control over spending. We, of course, support the motion to table this amendment.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

This amendment would give State and local governments extra help in dealing with violent youth. Nothing would be mandated; State and local governments that did not want the help would not have to ask for it. However, we believe that most State and local governments would welcome assistance. In the wake of the horrendous school shootings that have occurred around the country, people are anxiously gathering as much information as they can on how to prevent future such tragedies and on how to deal with them should they again occur. We are especially supportive of the national clearinghouse that would be created by this amendment that would serve as a central repository of information on all of the approaches that have been tried and on how those approaches have worked or failed. If we want to stop school violence, we are going to have to invest more money up front, especially on prevention programs. This amendment would provide more funding for reducing school violence. We urge our colleagues to oppose the motion to table this amendment.